

CONFIDENTIAL

MEMORANDUM

November 25, 1959

TO: EUR - Mr. Foy D. Kohler

FROM: SOV - Richard H. Davis

SUBJECT: Possible Indications that the Soviets are Preparing for Serious Negotiations

*Sum*  
I am impressed by these points. If we can work out a common view with RSB, we should certainly get the analysis to the Sec Pres and get essential points into West. Summary papers  
RDK

A careful rereading of Khrushchev's Supreme Soviet speech of October 31 inclines us to believe that he said a number of things which would probably have to be said properly to prepare Soviet opinion for the prospect of serious negotiations. More precisely, they seem to be an attempt to capitalize on the broad Soviet desire for peace and to focus this desire so that Khrushchev can claim popular support to buttress him in any intra-Party discussions. We recognize that it could be claimed with some validity that these things might be said to authenticate the Soviet desire for settlements in order better to blame the Western nations should the negotiations fail to yield objectives desirable to the Soviets. However, it seems to us that this objective could have been accomplished without going to the lengths of the speech.

We do not pretend that any firm conclusions can be made from this evidence nor that whatever "concessions" Khrushchev might be prepared to make would suffice to make agreements possible. We should also point out that RSB probably does not incline to our view and we are passing along a copy for their comments. Nevertheless, without claiming that this represents in any sense a balanced analysis, we were struck with the following:

1. Khrushchev speaks of "mutual concessions" five times in the space of two pages. He states in several different ways that "the principle of peaceful coexistence of states with different social systems means... the need for mutual concessions, compromises--adaptations if you like--on both sides in the domain of inter-state relations in the solution of mature, practical questions, in the

CONFIDENTIAL

Interest

REC-28 1959

E  
D

CONFIDENTIAL

-2-

interest of maintaining and strengthening peace." This is the first Soviet reference to the need for Soviet concessions in some time. You will recall that prior to the Geneva negotiations Western statesmen's demands for concessions by both sides were consistently denounced by Soviet propaganda media as an unacceptable application of market terminology to vital issues of peace, a demand for "bargaining" on principles.

Particularly striking is the reference to Brest-Litovsk as an example of "Lenin's wise and flexible foreign policy". Numerous other instances of Soviet concessions less damaging to Soviet national interests might well have been cited, and the reference to "Trotsky's adventurist policy"--"no war, no peace"--is a lethal and scarcely veiled warning to possible dissenters.

It should be noted that Khrushchev states adamantly that concessions cannot be made in matters affecting "the actual nature of our socialist system, our ideology". This, he says, would be a "betrayal of the cause of the working class" and the "fire of merciless criticism must be opened on him" who would contemplate it. This disclaimer seems to be less a contradiction of the necessity for "concessions" but more in the nature of assurance that he, Khrushchev, realizes the limits to which he can go and no critics need worry about it.

2) Less striking but possibly in the same pattern is Khrushchev's statement that "Communists know that the working class, the working peasantry, and all the working people pay for war with their blood and the capitalists make profits from wars." This seems to supply for the Soviet people the unchallengeable justification of any "mutual concessions" made for the sake of peace.

It also seems to us that the almost unprecedented Soviet publication of the text of Acheson's recent speech to the International Union of Parliamentarians fits into this context. Khrushchev is obviously documenting his case that there are important circles in the United States which do not want settlement. However, this could have been done

by the

CONFIDENTIAL

CONFIDENTIAL

-3-

by the usual authoritative Soviet commentary or through a judicious use of extractions from Acheson's speech without exposing Soviet readers to a lengthy and reasoned exposition of the need for Western firmness against Soviet encroachments. Going to this length, is Khrushchev not validating in the most convincing manner possible the wisdom and the virtual necessity of his supporting Eisenhower, who is a bulwark against such "propagandists of the cold war" by negotiating with him--and suggesting that it might not be possible to negotiate with his successors unless the process is begun with Eisenhower?

*See #3 of Moscow telegram 1537 also.*

cc: RSB  
S/P

EUR:SOV:JAarm ~~page~~:p1d

CONFIDENTIAL